

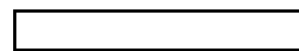
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12 October 1961

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# CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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State Dept. review completed

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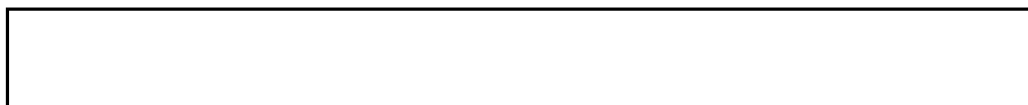
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UAR: [redacted] the Syrian revolt has led to talk among Egyptian Army officers about the prospects of ousting Nasir. [redacted] the disaffected officers are considering whether they should attempt to oust Nasir or merely seek the removal of his advisers, whom they hold largely responsible for the loss of Syria. [redacted] Nasir is aware of the plotting.

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The Egyptian Army has long been considered personally loyal to Nasir and the mainstay of the regime. Nasir's reported intention to fire Marshal Abd al-Hakim Amir--UAR vice president and commander in chief--for bungling in Syria may have stirred some disaffection. Firing Amir might add to the army's complaints against the regime, although he probably does not have a large following among Egyptian officers. [redacted]

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Britain-Berlin: In assessing current British opinion on the Berlin situation, the US Embassy in London reports that the current mood is one of relief that the US is engaged in exploratory talks with the Soviet Union. The view is widely held that de facto recognition of East Germany is the price the USSR seeks for a Berlin settlement and that the West can and should pay this price. Resolutions to this effect were enthusiastically accepted at the recent annual conferences of the Labor and Liberal parties, and similar views are likely to be expressed at the Conservative party conference this week.

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USSR-Finland: The USSR is trying to influence the Finnish presidential election, scheduled for 15 January 1962, in an effort to ensure the re-election of President Kekkonen. The recent good-will tour of Soviet President Brezhnev, in which he lauded Kekkonen for maintaining good relations with the USSR, has strengthened Kekkonen's position, as have the continuing negotiations on the offer by Moscow to lease its portion of the Saimaa Canal connecting the Finnish lake system with the Gulf of Finland. As early as last March the Soviets indicated their dislike of Kekkonen's leading rival, Olavi Honka, the candidate

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of the Social Democrat, Conservative, and Liberal parties. Kekkonen's forthcoming visit to the US is probably intended to balance out these Soviet endorsements. Honka has been waging an "uphill fight," and most observers in Finland believe that the election will be fairly close. [REDACTED]

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Finland-USSR

President Kekkonen's strongest appeal is the widespread belief in Finland that he has handled Finnish-Soviet relations skillfully. Kekkonen's supporters are playing on the fear of a recurrence of the 1958 crisis when the Soviet Union forced the fall of a cabinet objectionable to it. His re-election prospects will also be improved if, as rumored, he visits Moscow prior to the presidential election on 15-16 January to sign an agreement for leasing the Soviet portion of the truncated Saimaa Canal. The commander of the Finnish defense forces, General Simelius, left on 10 October for a private vacation in the USSR on an invitation given by Marshal Malinovsky when he visited Finland last April.

The Soviets' desire for the re-election of Kekkonen probably reflects their conviction that he is more likely to support Soviet foreign policy objectives than his leading rival, Honka, particularly in regard to recognition of the East German regime and creation of a neutral zone in northern and central Europe. When the 1962 trade negotiations begin late this month, the USSR can exert strong pressure to gain such support. [Soviet President Brezhnev implied during his recent visit that Kekkonen's defeat would lead to a deterioration in Soviet-Finnish relations and went out of his way to identify Kekkonen personally with the current "friendly relations." Brezhnev implied that Finland had a role to play in making a peace treaty with East Germany. A high Finnish Foreign Ministry official has denied that Brezhnev privately put any pressure on the Finns to recognize East Germany. Finland, however, was one of the four nonbloc countries to send a delegation to the 12th anniversary celebration in East Berlin of the founding of the East German Communist regime. The president of the East German parliament told the delegation that "no international obligation" prevented Finland from concluding a peace treaty with East Germany.)

[Brezhnev, according to the West German commercial representation in Helsinki, also encouraged Kekkonen to promote

the idea of a Scandinavian and central European neutral bloc during his forthcoming visit to the United States and Canada. Since 1952 Kekkonen and other Finnish officials have periodically referred to the desirability of a Scandinavian neutral bloc, believing Finland could better maintain its neutrality if the neutral area could be extended. The Finns wish to prevent the USSR from invoking the 1948 Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance between the two countries under the terms of which the Finns are obliged to resist an attack across Finnish territory on the USSR by Germany or a state allied to Germany. While the Finnish Government has not actively promoted a Nordic neutral bloc, there are indications that a number of prominent Finns have broached the idea to their Nordic associates. There is little likelihood that the Danes or Norwegians would be willing to withdraw from NATO.

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